[26th March 1954

APPENDIX I.

[Vide answer to starred question No. 404 asked by Sri D. Dasarathan (on behalf of Sri A. Ratnam) at the meeting of the Legislative Assembly held on 26th March 1954, page 1140 supra.]

Functions of Probation Officers.—The Probation Officers perform duties under the Madras Children Act, the Madras Borstal Schools Act, the Madras Probation of Offenders Act and Madras Suppression of Immoral Traffic Act. They submit preliminary enquiry reports regarding the home conditions, etc., of the offenders referred to them by the courts and advise the courts as to the manner in which the offenders are to be dealt with. When the courts place the offenders under their supervision, the Probation Officers make periodical visits and send systematic reports to courts besides helping them in securing jobs and settling in life. In the case of inmates and pupils discharged from the Borstal and Certified Schools, they have not only to send pre-discharge reports regarding suitability of release, etc., but also to supervise them for two to three years after release and help to rehabilitate them as useful citizens. The inmates of the Vigilance Home are interviewed before their discharge by the Probation Officers with a view to help them settle in life as normal citizens. Convicts released prematurely under the Advisory Board Scheme are entrusted to Probation Officers for proper guidance and help. The Probation Officers are also to make enquiries in maintenance cases and effect compromise wherever possible and in other cases to report to the courts as to the means of parties and also advise them regarding the course of action necessary. Recently, the Probation Officers in three centres, viz., Madras, Chingleput and Palayamkottai (besides Bellary since transferred to Mysore) were given the additional work of orientation and pre-discharge, in the correctional institutions at these places, viz., the Penitentiary, Senior Certified School, Borstal School and Central Jail. The object of this programme is to acquaint the convict, inmate or pupil as the case may be, soon after his admission to the institution, with the object of his detention, with the facilities which are available to him and which he can make use of in the institution for his reformation and re-education, to disabuse him of the wrong notions and ideas which he may have nurtured about correctional institutions and their staff, to enable him to keep in constant contact with his parents and relations outside, and thus in all possible ways to maintain his morale at a high level and prevent him from degeneration and despondency. They also make enquiries about marriage petitions received by the Girls' Certified School, Stri Sadana and Vigilance Home and requisitions for enquiries received from other States regarding children or adults detained there. In short, the District Probation Officers do the different kinds of the social work of the courts, prisons and other correctional institutions. They are also in touch with the local Social Welfare Organizations and marshal their help for the wards under their charge.